

The Ordeal of Mark Twain (Version 2)

Mark Twain (1835 – 1910)

Read by John Greenman

The Ordeal of Mark Twain analyzes the literary progression of Samuel L. Clemens and attributes shortcomings to Clemens' mother and wife. The Encyclopaedia Britannica says, Brooks' work "was a psychological study attempting to show that Twain had crippled himself emotionally and curtailed his genius by repressing his natural artistic bent for the sake of his Calvinist upbringing." Also, Brooks says, his literary spirit was sidelined as "...Mark Twain was inducted (with the success of 'Innocents Abroad') into the Gilded Age, launched, in defiance of that instinct which only for a few years was to allow him inner peace, upon the vast welter of a society blind like himself, like him committed to the pursuit of worldly success." And, still more disturbingly, Brooks maintains... "We shall see that in the end, never having been able to develop, to express itself, to fulfill itself, to air itself in the sun and the wind of the world, it turned as it were black and malignant, like some monstrous, morbid inner growth, poisoning Mark Twain's whole spiritual system. We have now to note its constant blind efforts to break through the censorship that had been imposed on it, to cross the threshold of the unconscious and play its part in the conscious life of this man whose will was always enlisted against it." The implication of all this begs the question, "What might a truly unleashed Mark Twain have produced?" For a recording of a New York Times review of this book, go this link: [Review \(John Greenman & Wikipedia\)](#)

Total running time: 11:03:06. 11 tracks.



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